PMAC PRINCE MAHIDOL AWARD CONFERENCE 2021

WS102

COMMUNICATION DURING HEALTH CRISES - TRANSLATING SCIENCES TO POLICY AND MANAGE THE INFODEMIC

| BACKGROUND

Communication during this COVID-19 pandemic has been particularly challenging. This is partly due to the increasing importance of social media and new technologies in the social fabric of our societies. The management of the infodemic (i.e., the overabundance of information that accompanies epidemics) requires more attention and specific interventions than in the past as fake news, scientific controversies, misinformation, and disinformation spread faster and further leading to mistrust towards institutions and science and to a negative impact on outbreak control. Communication is a broad issue that goes much beyond traditional messaging: it encompasses community engagement and empowerment and risk communication strategies as well as the interface between science and policy. This webinar will focus on lessons learned about the tools and transdisciplinary approaches that work to appropriately manage infodemics and to ensure a sustainable and effective societal response from translating science to policy.

| OBJECTIVES

- Address the following questions:

- How to effectively translate science to public health recommendations that will be followed by communities? How to convey the right information, at the right time, to the right audience, in the right format to ensure a right interpretation?

- How to ensure healthy science debates/controversies that do not undermine public trust in science?

- What would be effective approaches to tackle the multi-faceted aspects of infodemics?

- Extract 3 to 5 lessons learned regarding communication during epidemics/pandemics that will be used to develop a framework for the analysis of complex and multifaceted health crises.



Speaker

Michael Ryan

Executive Director, WHO Health Emergencies Programme

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Dr Mike Ryan has been at the forefront of managing acute risks to global health for nearly 25 years. He served as Assistant Director-General for Emergency Preparedness and Response in WHO's Health Emergencies Programme from 2017 to 2019.

Dr Ryan first joined WHO in 1996, with the newly established unit to respond to emerging and epidemic disease threats. He has worked in conflict affected countries and led many responses to high impact epidemics. He is a founding member of the Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network (GOARN), which has aided the response to hundreds of disease outbreaks around the world. He served as Coordinator of Epidemic Response (2000-2003), Operational Coordinator of WHO’s response to the SARS outbreak (2003), and as WHO’s Director of Global Alert and Response (2005-2011),

He was a Senior Advisor on Polio Eradication for the Global Polio Eradication Initiative from 2013 to 2017, deploying to countries in the Middle East.

He completed medical training at the National University of Ireland, Galway, a Master’s in Public Health at University College Dublin, and specialist training in communicable disease control at the Health Protection Agency in London and the European Programme for Intervention Epidemiology Training.